



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/785,211	02/24/2004	Robert M. Lofthus	A3249Q XERZ 2 00783	8821

7590 03/21/2006

Patrick R. Roche  
FAY, SHARPE, FAGAN, MINNICH & Mc KEE, LLP  
Seventh Floor  
1100 Superior Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44114-2579

EXAMINER

MACKEY, PATRICK HEWEY

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3651

DATE MAILED: 03/21/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/785,211	<b>Applicant(s)</b> LOFTHUS ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Patrick H. Mackey	<b>Art Unit</b> 3651	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

### Period for Reply

**A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.**

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 2/22/2006 has been entered.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1, 5, 6, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Jackson et al. Jackson discloses a multifunction printed sheets interface system that includes plural sheet input areas (front left side of conveyor 20, front right side of conveyor 20); plural sheet outputs areas (rear left side of conveyor 20, rear right side of conveyor 20); a sheet position sensing system (40); and a sheet transporting system (20) that includes independently operable sheet transports (26) that provide variable angle driving for selectable sheet rotation and translation (see col. 2, lines 40-45).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 3651

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 2, 8-10, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jorg in view of Graushar. Jorg discloses a method and system that includes feeding sheets to a plurality of respective input areas (A, B, C, D) of a printed sheet interface system; transporting the printed sheets from the input areas to a plurality of outputs areas (F, G) with a sheet transport system, with a plurality of spaced, independently operable sheet transports (316, 416), that provide selectable merging (116), translation (116), and rotation (134); and sensing a position, with a sheet position sensing system (220) of the sheets during transporting. Jorg discloses all the limitations of the claim, but it does not disclose printing sheets on a plurality of printers. However, Graushar discloses a similar method that includes printing sheets on a plurality of printers (see col. 4, lines 45-56) for the purpose of personalizing documents sent to customers (see col. 1, lines 10-15). It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to modify Jorg by printing the sheets on a plurality of printers, as disclosed by Graushar, for the purpose of personalizing documents sent to customers.

6. Claims 4, 11-13, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jorg in view of Graushar as applied to claims 8 and 10 above, and further in view of Jackson et al. Jorg and Graushar, together disclose all the limitations of the claims, but they do not disclose a sheet transporting system that includes a multiplicity of variable-sheet-feeding-direction sheet transports closer to four other sheet transports than the sheet and configured for variable angle driving. However, Jackson discloses a similar device that includes a sheet transporting system (20) with a multiplicity of variable-sheet-feeding-direction sheet transports closer to four other

Art Unit: 3651

sheet transports than the sheet and configured for variable angle driving for the purpose of modifying paper movement or orientation to nearly instantaneously correct for discrepancies in the motion state of the paper, including its position, orientation, trajectory, velocity, flexure, or curvature (see col. 2, lines 35-45). It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to utilize a sheet transporting system with a multiplicity of variable-sheet-feeding-direction sheet transports (26) closer to four other sheet transports than the sheet and configured for variable angle driving for the purpose of modifying paper movement or orientation to nearly instantaneously correct for discrepancies in the motion state of the paper, including its position, orientation, trajectory, velocity, flexure, or curvature.

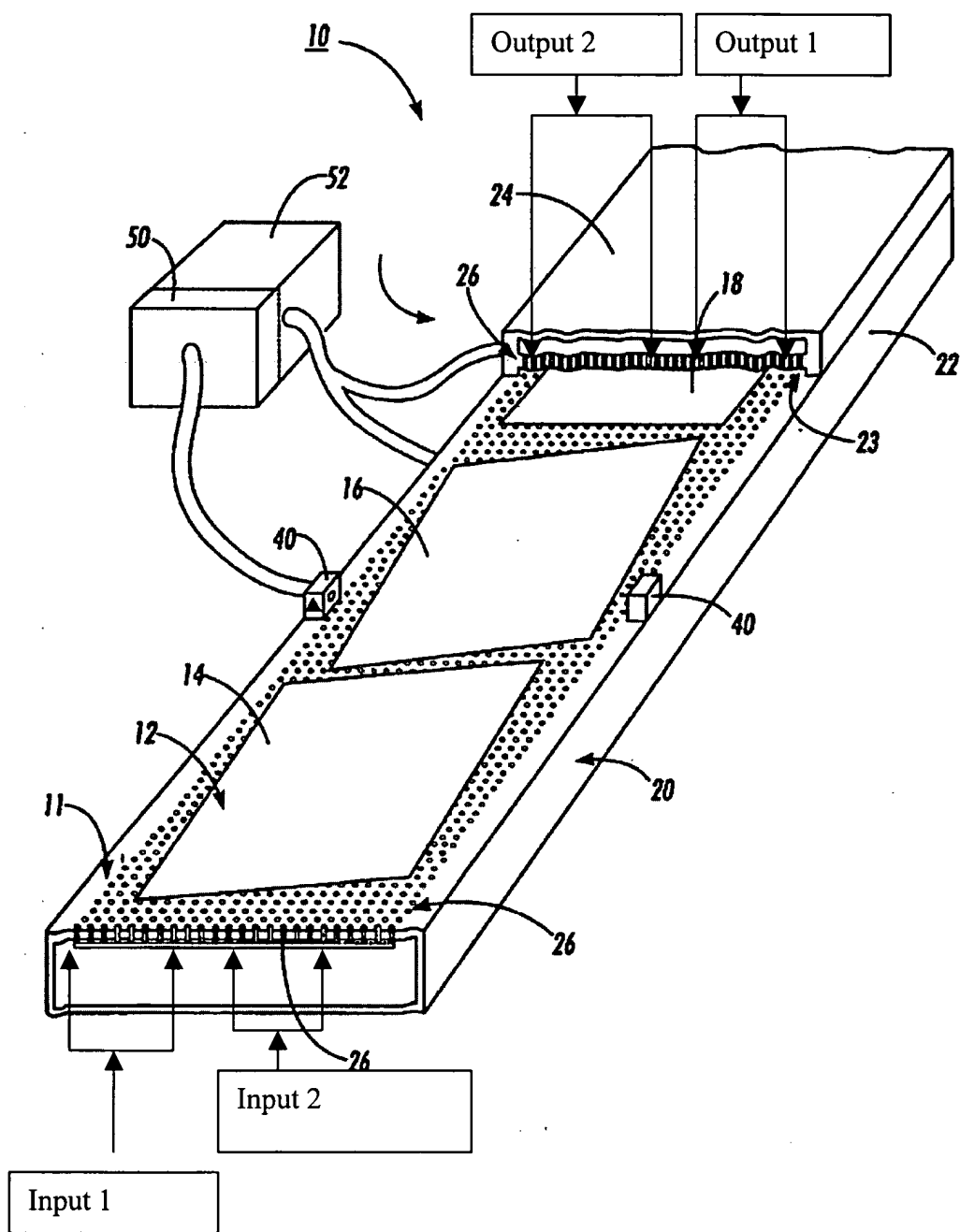
7. Claims 1, 3, and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jorg in view of Jackson et al. Jorg discloses a system that includes plural sheet input areas (A, B, C, D); a plurality of sheet outputs (F, G); a sheet position sensing system (220); and a sheet transport system that provides selectable sheet merging (116). Jorg discloses all the limitations of the claims, but it does not disclose that the sheet transporting system includes independently operable sheet transports that provide variable angle driving. However, Jackson discloses a similar device that includes independently operable sheet transports (26) that provide variable angle driving for the purpose of modifying paper movement or orientation to nearly instantaneously correct for discrepancies in the motion state of the paper, including its position, orientation, trajectory, velocity, flexure, or curvature (see col. 2, lines 35-45). It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to modify Jorg, by utilizing a sheet transporting system that includes independently operable sheet transports that provide variable angle driving, as disclosed by Jackson, for the purpose of

Art Unit: 3651

modifying paper movement or orientation to nearly instantaneously correct for discrepancies in the motion state of the paper, including its position, orientation, trajectory, velocity, flexure, or curvature.

***Response to Arguments***

8. Applicant's arguments filed 2/22/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.
9. The applicant states that Jackson does not disclose selectable sheet input areas and selectable sheet output areas. The examiner disagrees with the applicant. To clarify the examiner's position, Figure 1 is reproduced below with the plural input areas and plural output areas. Note that Jackson discloses adjusting the paper topography of various sizes of sheets (see col. 3, lines 40-50).



Art Unit: 3651

10. The applicant states that Jorg does not disclose selectively rotating sheets of paper. The examiner disagrees. Turnover device 134 rotates a sheet of paper over.

11. The applicant states that neither Jorg nor Graushar disclose a plurality of printers feeding sheets to input areas. The examiner notes that Jorg discloses input areas, Graushar discloses a plurality of printers, and it would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to modify Jorg by printing the sheets on a plurality of printers, as disclosed by Graushar, for the purpose of personalizing documents sent to customers.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patrick H. Mackey whose telephone number is (571) 272-6916. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Crawford can be reached on (571) 272-6911. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



Art Unit: 3651

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Mackey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Patrick H. Mackey  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3651

March 17, 2006